A Lent like no other
people in darkness have seen a great light

BY CHRIS KALLUS
Special to The Lighthouse

What is it like to be shot out of a can-non? That is exactly what happens when the priest gives us our final blessing at the end of Mass.

The word Mass comes from the Latin word “Missa,” At one time, the people were dismissed with the words, “Ite, missa est,” literally translated, “Go (meaning you) the Church, has been sent.” The word “Missa” is related to the word “missio,” the root of the English word “mission” – a sending forth.

So, what are we being sent to do?

Let’s look at Mark’s Gospel, Chapter 1, verses 14-15, which says, “After John had been arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: ‘This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.’”

In Greek, the word for repent is “metanoia,” which means to have a complete change of heart to follow him. Jesus will cure all that gets in our way of attaining the impossible task of his mission.

Jesus’s mission had one central pur-

Study Mass, return in awe

JANET JONES, Editor
The Catholic Lighthouse

As we watched the pandemic shutting down the world as we know it, the Diocese of Victoria’s churches’ response was fast and effective. Hope and reassurance obscured sadness and anxiety almost before it started, it seemed.

The Office of Communications has been flooded with hopeful messages and ideas to be shared.

Though we are concerned about our health and your health, worried about those who are sick and in the dark about what will happen next, so much creativity has come out of this. So many people started sharing ideas, picking up cameras, building websites and Facebook pages, finding resources for Mass, Lent and inspiration in general.

We are paving the road to solutions for future dilemmas.

And we are writing history.

“Get in the Game” men’s conference goes virtual. See Page 11

Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin show us the way to make a ‘blessed space’ out of isolation. See Page 16

…”The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

www.victoriadiocese.org

APRIL 2020

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Dec. 31 – Outbreak of virus reported in Wuhan, China
Jan. 7 – “Novel” virus identified
Jan. 11 – First known COVID-19 death
Jan. 21 – U.S. announces first confirmed case in Washington State
Jan. 30 – World Health Organization calls it an emergency
Jan. 31 – Travel restrictions begin
Feb. 24 – Italy becomes the hardest hit

Feb. 26 – Ash Wednesday
March 6 – High profile events canceled in U.S.
March 8 – Italy goes on lockdown
March 11 – COVID-19 deemed a pandemic; professional sports begin to cancel seasons
March 12 – First case in the DOV reported in Lavaca County
March 13 – President Donald Trump declares national emergency
March 14 – Bay City reports 1st case
March 15 – Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria extend spring breaks
March 16 – Gatherings of more than 10 are discouraged
March 17 – Diocese of Victoria announces “No public Masses”
March 17 – Diocese-wide men’s gathering switches to virtual platform
March 19 – Worldwide Rosary promoted in the diocese
March 19 – Catholic schools in DOV announce closure through April 3 at midnight
March 20 – Many DOV churches set up Stations of the Cross and prepare to have Mass virtually
March 21 – Virtual men’s conference deemed a success
March 22 – 300,000 cases worldwide with 13,000 deaths
March 24 – First case in Victoria County

“Study Mass, return in awe” by Chris Kallus
Special to The Lighthouse

What is it like to be shot out of a cannon? That is exactly what happens when the priest gives us our final blessing at the end of Mass.

The word Mass comes from the Latin word “Missa,” At one time, the people were dismissed with the words, “Ite, missa est,” literally translated, “Go (meaning you) the Church, has been sent.” The word “Missa” is related to the word “missio,” the root of the English word “mission” – a sending forth.

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In Greek, the word for repent is “metanoia,” which means to have a complete change of heart to follow him. Jesus will cure all that gets in our way of attaining the impossible task of his mission.

Jesus’s mission had one central purpose.
‘Queen of seasons’ brings new creation

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On our spiritual journey, we often reach a point when we desire a change but feel it isn’t possible. Change, even for something good, can be hard and stressful.

In the time of Easter, we face this reality with the hope that changing for the better is always possible. As we celebrate the victory of Jesus over sin and death, we celebrate also the victories of the disciples -- from fear to courage; of the thief next to Jesus on the cross -- from despair to a place in the kingdom; of the centurion -- from active participation in the crucifixion to the proclamation of faith that Jesus truly was the Son of God.

With the faithful women at the tomb who came to believe in the resurrection of Jesus, we are invited to share real hope in the power of Jesus – and so the Church rejoices in this season.

St. Gregory Nazianzen, who preached in the fourth century in what is now modern-day Turkey, began a sermon for the Octave of Easter with the following: “Everything contributes to the beauty and the joy of the feast. The queen of the seasons makes a feast for the queen of days and offers everything she has that is most beautiful and pleasing. The sky is the most transparent, the sun at its highest and brightest, the course of the moon at its most brilliant, and the choir of the stars at its most purest. The springs run at their clearest, the rivers are most abundant, freed from their fetters of ice. The fields are filled with sweet scents, green things spring up, the lambs bound in the green grass. Ships go out from their ports with all the sails filled, and the dolphins accompany them bounding and joyfully blowing. The shepherds and cowherds tune their flutes and pipe a melody.” (Jean Danielou, SJ, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 291 - University of Notre Dame Press, 1956)

May you and your families have a blessed, hopeful Easter, with confidence in the personal love of Jesus for you and in the gift of the Holy Spirit to give you strength each day.

+Brendan

‘Reina de las estaciones’ trae nuevas creaciones

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

En nuestro viaje espiritual, a menudo llegamos a un punto en el que deseamos un cambio pero sentimos que no es posible. El cambio, incluso por algo bueno, puede ser difícil y estresante.

En el tiempo de Pascua, enfrentamos esta realidad con la esperanza de que siempre sea posible cambiar para mejor. Al celebrar la victoria de Jesús sobre el pecado y la muerte, también celebramos las victorias de los discípulos -- desde el miedo hasta el coraje; del ladrón al lado de Jesús en la cruz, -- de la desesperación a un lugar en el reino; del centurión -- desde la participación activa en la crucifixión hasta la proclamación de fe de que Jesús realmente era el Hijo de Dios.

Con las mujeres fieles en la tumba que llegaron a creer en la resurrección de Jesús, nos invitan a compartir una esperanza real en el poder de Jesús, y así la Iglesia se regocija en esta temporada.

San Gregorio Nazianzen, quien predicó en el siglo IV en lo que hoy es la Turquía moderna, comenzó un sermón para la Oc-tava de Pascua con lo siguiente: “Todo contribuye a la belleza y la alegría de la fiesta. La reina de las estaciones hace un festín para la reina de los días y ofrece todo lo que tiene que es más hermoso y agradable. El cielo es el más transparente, el sol en su punto más alto y brillante, el curso de la luna en su punto más brillante y el coro de las estrellas en su punto más puro. Los manantiales corren en su punto más claro, los ríos son más abundantes, liberados de sus griletes de hielo. Los campos están llenos de aromas dulces, brotan cosas verdes, los corderos atados en la hierba verde. Los barcos salen de sus puertos con todas las velas llenas, y los delfines los acompañan saltando y alegres. Los pastores y los pastores afinan sus flautas y cantan una melodía.” (Jean Danielou, SJ, The Bible and the Liturgy, p. 291 - University of Notre Dame Press, 1956)

Las imágenes antiguas de la naturaleza hablan poderosamente de la temporada de Pascua como un tiempo de nuevos comenzos y una nueva creación. El mensaje de los primeros cristianos habla incluso hasta nuestros días. Cualquiera sea la intensidad de los desafíos, dudas o temores que enfrentamos, la victoria de Jesucristo sobre el pecado y la muerte es mucho mayor, ¡así que todo el mundo se regocija en esta temporada! La reina de las estaciones llama al mundo a regocijarse y proclamar: “¡Aleluya, ha resucitado!” El ciclo de estaciones nos enseña que cada vez en nuestras vidas tiene un propósito y un plan, todo en el tiempo de Dios. A medida que el invierno nieva y las lluvias son necesarias para las corrientes y el crecimiento de la primavera, los desafíos y dolores que enfrentamos se convierten en oportunidades para encontrar la gracia sanadora de Dios. La persona que recibe la gracia sanadora de Dios a menudo se convierte en el testigo más fuerte de esperanza en el mundo. ¡Qué maravillosa noticia para nosotros y para el mundo - ser sanados y ser sanadores!

Que usted y sus familias tengan una Pascua bendecida y esperanzada, con confianza en el amor personal de Jesús por usted y en el don del Espíritu Santo para darle fuerzas cada día.

+Brendan
Please Note ALL Scheduled Events Are Subject To CHANGE

**Bishop Cahill’s Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 15</td>
<td>6 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Wharton</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 17</td>
<td>Incarnate Word Academy Gala, Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 18</td>
<td>• Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville • 5 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Nativity of the BVM, Nada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>• 8:00 a.m. Mass and then CCD visit at St. Mary Church, Praha • 2 p.m. Confirmation Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td>• 6:30 a.m. Relevant Radio Morning Air Show call in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 22</td>
<td>• Mass at John XXIII High School, Katy • 6:30 p.m. Confirmation Mass Sacred Heart, Hallettsville</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 23</td>
<td>6:30 p.m. Gabriel Project Appreciation Dinner; Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 24-26</td>
<td>TSC KC 116th Annual State Convention, Dallas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>6 p.m. Open procession and Mass for Our Lady of Lavang Vietnamese Mass, Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>• Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville • 5 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Joseph, Yoakum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>3 p.m. Confirmation Mass for St. Cyril and Methodius; Shiner</td>
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</tbody>
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**Bishop Fellhauer’s Confirmation Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td>10 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Michael, Cuero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td>10 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Family, Wharton</td>
</tr>
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**Official Announcements**

**Effective July 1, 2020:**

**Reverend Greg Korenek** is appointed pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Victoria, Texas and is relieved of his duties as pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Bay City, Texas and its mission of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Wadsworth, Texas.

**Reverend Robert Knippenberg** is appointed pastor of Queen of the Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Hostyn, Texas and Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Plum, Texas and is relieved of his duties as pastor of Holy Family Catholic Church in Wharton and its mission of Saint Joseph Catholic Church in Boling.

Please continue financial contributions

We cannot place the envelope in the offering basket at this time, so the Diocese of Victoria has made it possible for parishioners to continue supporting their churches online. Public Masses may be suspended, however, your parish priests and leaders are working hard to stay connected to parishioners and meet their needs – and pay the bills.

Go to [www.victoriadiocese.org/parish-donations](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/parish-donations) to contribute.

And thank you for your generosity.

Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who were ordained during the month of April:

Rev. Timothy Kosler  04/23/1971  St. Rose of Lima Church, Schulenburg
Rev. Msgr. John Peters, VG  04/26/1974  Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville

“Let us pray for more vocations to the priesthood”

Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you! Do not be afraid to dream of great things!”  -Pope Francis

Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who died during the month of April:

Rev. Msgr Michael Harrold  04/02/2015
Rev. Henry Rachunek  04/03/2013
Rev. Msgr. Edward Bartsch  04/04/2010
Rev. Peter Kaplinski  04/07/2003
Rev. Michael Malloy, O.Ss.T.  04/12/1986
Rev. Henry Psencik  04/14/1989
Rev. Msgr. Thomas C. McLaughlin  04/17/2017
Rev. Charles Sonnier  04/22/2016

“Eternal rest granted unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.  May they rest in peace.”
Seminary Endowment Fund

Seminary Endowment Fund (formerly known as Seminary Burses) is a permanent fund used for the education of future priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The goal of each burse is $15,000. The interest from this amount is applied yearly to the education of seminarians. The burses are in memory of or in honor of an individual priest or layperson, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received. Donation Categories: Lector - $.01 - $99.99; Acolyte – $100 - $499.99; Candidate – $500 - $1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – $1,500 - $2,499.99; Priest – $2,500 >.

March 24, 2020

• General Seminary Burse  
  Lector  
  In memory of Johnny Prihoda by:  
  Thomas Schneider  
  Robert and Sharon Huette  
  Grace Lebeda  
  In memory of Lillian Besetzny,  
  Grandmother of Seminarian Caleb  
  Krischke by Hardy and JoAnn McCullough  
  • Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse  
  Acolyte  
  In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by  
  CDA Court of Our Lady of the Rosary  
  #1595, Nada  
  • Rev. Wayne Flagg and Rev. Philip Brune Seminary Burse  
  Lector  
  In honor of Deacon James Dvorak’s  
  birthday celebration by  
  Mark and Sharon Kubicek  
  • Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse  
  Acolyte  
  In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by  
  CDA Court of Our Lady of the Rosary  
  #1595, Nada  
  • Rev. Dan Morales Seminary Burse in  
  Honor of his Work for Vocations  
  Acolyte  
  In memory of Rev. Dan Morales by Court  
  Daughters of the Holy Family #2665  

• Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #8  
  Lector  
  Donation by Soila Sanchez  
  In memory of Roger Janak by Pat Mladenka  
  • Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse  
  Lector  
  In memory of Annie Dolezal by:  
  The Robert Matlock Family  
  Jerry and Arlene Matlock  
  The Joe Roberts Family  
  Benny and Yvonne Farley  
  Evelyn Robinson  
  Kenny and Donna Brune  
  CDA Court Our Lady of the Sea, #2133  
  Acolyte  
  In memory of Annie Dolezal by:  
  Tiana and Eric Mortimer  
  Sandra Digiovanni  
  Helen and Billy Dolezal  
  • St. John the Baptist Church, St. John In  
  Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes  
  Seminary Burse #2  
  Lector  
  In loving memory of Lillian Besetzny,  
  Grandmother of Seminarian Caleb  
  Krischke by:  
  Ralph and Bonnie Besetzny  
  Mark and Dianne Grahman  
  Dolores Janak  
  Glen and Donna Lux  
  Marcus and Sharon Bujnoch  

Gladys Besetzny  
M/M Frank Bludau, Sr.  
Albert and Dorothy Olsovsky  
Donald and Karen Kutac  
Arnold and Dorothy Berger  
Jerry and Gayle Akers  
Tony and Joyce Bludau  
Harvey and Cathy Besetzny  
Danny and Donna Neiser, Jr.  
Theresa and Tony Rerich  
Mike and Elizabeth Holub  
Joan Prihoda  
Elsie Ferek  
Monica and Donald Heine  
Stanley and Mary Jane Pesak  
Diane Kutac  
Evelyn Kusy  
Harvey and Evelyn Hermis  
A.J. and Gladys Kutac  
Leonard and Grace Sumbera  
Dennis and Patricia Otto  
Lad and Denise Trojacek  
Marybeth Krischke  
David and Kathy Orsak  
Tommy and Sara Bludau

BY RON SITKA  
Special to The Lighthouse  

Due to the current situation with the  
coronavirus pandemic, the  
committee for the Bishop  
David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament has decided  
to postpone this year’s tournament to Friday, Sept. 18.  
The original date was to be April 24.  

The sponsorship, team signup and other information  
about this year’s tournament were sent out to all our past  
sponsors and players.  We have already been receiving  
donations and sponsorships in the mail at the chancery office.  
I want to assure you that all funds collected will be applied to  
the Chancery Youth Office Programs or the Vocation/Seminarians  
per your instructions in your submittal.  
We still need and ask for your support for this event and  
the great programs that it supports.  
Golfers who want to play in the tournament on the  
original date were sent out to all our past  
sponsors and players.  Please remember that a “Priest” level  
sponsorship is the minimum level required for priority team  
registration if the field fills up.  
Thank you for your continued support.  
For information about registrations or sponsorships,  
contact Wendy Eggert, Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Victoria, at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2232, or email weggert@victoriadiocese.org.  

• Ron Sitka is chairman of the  
Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament.
Jesus’ passion evident in his anguish

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS

We are currently experiencing the most passionate or emotionally charged time of the liturgical year. Normally we look at the word “passion” as found in the Passion of Christ which is defined as “the sufferings of Christ between the night of the Last Supper and his death.” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

However that same dictionary also defines the word “passion” as “ardent affection, love, or a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept.” So now, let’s look at this concept of God’s great love – passion – for each of us as we reflect on Jesus’ sufferings.

We are filled with jubilation and expectancy as we see a loving Jesus riding on a humble donkey rather than a victorious warhorse and being cheered by the simple people of Jerusalem. This celebration shifts to a more solemn mood as the chief priests and scribes plot to turn the multitudes away from Jesus and to capture and destroy him.

Knowing what we know now, we can see how Jesus loved us as he earned our eternal salvation through his agony, which culminated in a most shameful and excruciating death.

It was through his passionate love for us that he endured his anguish, which must have been intensified:

• by the betrayal on one of his own, Judas;
• by his disciples falling asleep three times during his terrible agony in the garden;
• by the desertion of so many of his disciples during his ordeal;
• by the boastful Peter’s denial;
• by the mockery of bystanders; and
• by the extreme sense of abandonment during his death struggle that compels him to cry out in the words of the psalmist, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” (Psalm 22:2a)

Very likely this psalm was part of Jesus’ memory bank of prayer; in great anguish, he would turn to it just as one of us might begin to pray the Lord’s Prayer in time of distress. Psalm 22 is a psalm of lamentation, which expresses a severe intensity of passion, a feeling of abandonment and turmoil by Jesus, as he cries out to his Father.

After Jesus cries out and dies, it is the utterance by the Gentile centurion, “Truly this was the Son of God,” which captures the significance of Jesus’ passionate act of ardent love for us.

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• Emotional • Material • Spiritual • Educational • Providing immediate and practical help.

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Victoria Gabriel Project
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1-866-627-9243
www.victoriagabrielproject.org

St. Patrick’s Catholic Church
1510 E State Hwy 183, Round Rock, TX 78664

Spring Festival
Sunday, April 26th, 2020
11:00 a.m.

BBQ Brisket Plate
1/2 lb BBQ Brisket
Potato salad, beans, bread & dessert
$10/Plate

Live & Silent Auction
11:30 a.m.

Pre-order whole cooked brisket $10/lb
contact Thomas Pribyl (512) 677-1795
by April 17th.

Grand Prize
$1000 Visa Gift Card
Raffle tickets available from Church members, office
and on Festival day.
Tickets: 3 for $5 or $2 per ticket

Live & Silent Auction

Cake Walk
Children’s Games
Country Store
Face Painting
Refreshments and much more!

All activities will be held in the parish hall.
For more information call (512) 897-1135, on festival day call (512) 897-1398

www.saintpatrickschurchnet
saintpatricks@triplejreal.com
Practicing Spiritual Communion fits perfectly into Lent

It goes without saying that practicing Catholics in good standing will receive Jesus in the Precious Body and Precious Blood during the Eucharist at least on Sunday. Right?

For many, it seemed like the worst-case scenario when the Church announced that Mass would be closed to the public — an unprecedented situation, at least in this lifetime.

For just a minute it felt like falling down a rabbit hole. But after that first shock, you look up and see the sun is still shining. And there is the Church, finding new ways to reach out and minister, throwing out lifelines for those who are anxious, afraid or lonely.

We have been told, “You can make a Spiritual Communion.” The term is self-explanatory. You make Communion in spirit. Look it up and you will find many beautifully written prayers to help you do this.

It is not the same as receiving the Body and Blood physically. But with this pandemic there are sacrifices. And in those sacrifices are magnificent opportunities. It should not be lost on us that this is happening during Lent, a time to suffer a little and grow a lot before Easter.

In the Gospel of Matthew, there is a story about a woman who had suffered a hemorrhage for a long time. She knew for spiritual or social reasons she could not touch Jesus, the man. But she desired his healing to the point that she dared to brush the hem of his garment. She believed so deeply in the power of Christ that by coming close to him without touching his flesh, she was healed. That was Spiritual Communion.

A little research tells us that Spiritual Communion involves an act of faith, an act of love, a strong desire to be united with Jesus, and an invitation for Jesus to be in our hearts. The words of the already-written prayers cover all of those things: “My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament. I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul. Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You. Never permit me to be separated from You. Amen.” (from OurCatholicPrayers.com)

A wonderful thing about this is that it can be done anywhere and any time you need to call on Jesus and remind yourself that he is with you. How easy it is to fit Communion into your day, many times a day.

We can do this in our actions as well. Invite someone to pray with you at home or watch Mass on TV. Show someone you love them by sharing a meal or bringing something they need. And reach out to other members of the Body of Christ to remind them and yourself that you are united in the Sacrament.

Look Up
By Janet Jones, Editor
The Catholic Lighthouse
SHINER — Holly H. could have probably spent last summer doing a thousand different things. But rather than relax at the pool or visit with friends, the Shiner St. Paul junior chose to fill her days working with cancer patients at Houston’s renowned M.D. Anderson Medical Center.

What’s more, she can’t wait to do it all again this summer.

Hull, the daughter of Kerri and Chris Hull of Shiner, returns this year as one of the prestigious youth program’s junior leaders. In fact, she recently joined hospital staff to interview and weigh in on the nominations of the more than 600 applicants who apply annually for the program.

Less than a tenth of those applicants are selected into the program each year.

But for someone who aspires to join the highly competitive field of physical therapy, it was something of a dream come true, Holly admits.

“I don’t want to sound corny, but I need to help people,” she said. “And this program fills that need in me and gives me the opportunity to do so every day.”

Holly recently helped organize a gift drive for cancer patients at her school, collecting pillows, blankets, hats and other items to make people’s day a bit brighter. That drive continues through mid-March for anyone who might be interested in contributing. Items can be dropped off at the school office.

Of course, some may say she had an inside track into the program, even though it’s a track she wouldn’t wish on anyone. Holly’s parents — mom, Kerri, the Shiner Catholic school secretary, and dad, Chris, a safety supervisor at Victoria’s Invista plant — both battled cancer. In fact, both were patients at that very same medical center at various times of her youth.

It was that experience, watching her parents go through treatments and recover, combined with some of her own experience, dealing with baseball injuries, that instilled in her a passion for the medical field and, specifically, physical therapy.

“There are patients, many who don’t even speak English, scared to death already because of their illness, and they suddenly find themselves in someplace as big as that, with no family at all to help them along,” Holly said.

That’s where junior volunteers like her come into the picture. As Holly put it, “Just a friendly face in all of that can go long way to making people feel so much better.”

To more about the teen volunteer opportunities with M.D. Anderson, visit their web page at https://www.mdanderson.org/ and click on the “Donors and Volunteers” tab.

**SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY** — St. Rose of Lima Catholic School in Schulenburg recently held its “Souper Bowl of Caring” drive and was able to donate $1,280.90 to the Schulenburg Area Food Pantry. In the picture on the left, Principal Rosanne Gallia, right, makes the check presentation to Peggy Kusy of the SAFP. The school also did a “Change for Change” uniform replacement drive during Catholic Schools Week and, with donations totaling $1,000, they gave $800 to Turtle Wing Foundation and $200 to the Down Syndrome Foundation of South Texas. At right, Gallia gives the check DeeAnn Hooper of Turtle Wing Foundation. (Contributed Photos)

Go to Diocese of Victoria Catholic Schools on Facebook as well as Diocese of Victoria to keep up with what is happening in our area. We are also posting information at www.victoriadiocese.org.

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**Student excels in GeoBee contest**

VICTORIA — Our Lady of Victory Catholic School fifth-grader Mandeep J. was advanced to National Geographic’s 2020 GeoBee Texas State Competition. It was set to take place March 27, but was canceled due to the corona virus precautions. This was the second level of the National Geographic GeoBee competition.

GeoBee competitions were held in schools throughout the state with students in the fourth through eighth grades. School champions took an online qualifying test, which they submitted to the National Geographic Society.

Up to 100 of the top-scoring students advanced to the state competition.

State winners were to go to the 2020 National Championship to be held on May 18-21 at the National Geographic headquarters in Washington, D.C., which also has been canceled.

Mandeep is the son of Dr. Arun and Mrs. Naveen J.
Screen time:
How much is too much?

With the latest CDC guidelines limiting our time outside the home, it’s easy to just put ourselves and our children in front of a screen for hours on end. Is this bad? Actually, not all of it is, but moderation is key. For ages 2 to 5, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends limiting screen time to one hour per day of high-quality programming. Just make sure to preview what your child watches for quality and appropriateness, and watch with them whenever possible so you can help them understand what they’re seeing. What about the very little ones under 2? The AAP discourages all media use for children younger than 18 to 24 months, except for video chatting.

So what do we do with all of this other time not being spent on the phone? How can we possibly entertain our children for that long?

Believe me, as a parent of three children under 5, I empathize with you. Children have energy that never seems to run out, which is an enormous blessing, but can also wear parents out. Here are a few suggestions of how to spend time together not in front of a screen:

1. Prayer. Yes, small children can pray, too. How can they pray? Just like you. Open up the Bible and read a short passage to them, then ask them what they think about it. Or, even introduce them to something like the rosary. I thought we would have to wait until my 4-year-old was at least 7 or 8 until we tried the rosary, but, with the encouragement of some friends, we decided to try now. I’ve been blown away with the results. Not only can he pray the rosary, he gets upset if anyone else tries to lead it. Don’t underestimate the spirituality of your children.

2. Read books. Did you know one of the primary indicators of children being successful when they grow up is if their parents read stories to them? Don’t be afraid to crack open that old classic you loved growing up, or to make up your own stories with your kids. We often amaze ourselves with our own creativity.

3. Play games. Make up your own games. My wife made up a crazy board game with my kids the other week and they loved it. It was a lot like Candy Land, where you simply roll dice and move spaces based on that. But my kids would’ve made you think it was the most exciting game ever created. What about older kids? Bust out the Monopoly, Battleship or Guess Who? These games we loved growing up will surely entertain our own children and show them that the most fun can be found outside of a screen or handheld device.

So fear not. We can entertain our children for hours on end. God has given us everything we need. But don’t feel bad if you need to take a break and play a movie every now and then.

Until next time, I hope you can discuss this topic at your own table with family and friends. And if you ever want to chat with me about what I’ve written, or anything else, please call me at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265.

God bless!
— Justin Reyes is the director of the Office of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria, Contact him at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265, or jreyes@victoriadiocese.org.
Peace comes through repentance, reconciliation

BY CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People who cannot get to confession because of the coronavirus lockdown or another serious reason can go to God directly, be specific about their sins, request pardon and experience God's loving forgiveness, Pope Francis said.

"This is the right time, the opportune moment. An act of contrition done well, and our souls will become white like the snow," the pope said March 20 during his live streamed morning Mass.

Pope Francis began the Mass by praying again for doctors, especially in northern Italy, where the COVID-19 pandemic still is infecting thousands and leading to the deaths of hundreds of people each day.

The Italian health ministry announced late March 19 that the number of deaths in Italy had reached 3,407, surpassing by 277 the number of people who had died in China because of the virus.

Italy began a nationwide lockdown March 10 in an attempt to slow the spread of the coronavirus. Churches are open for private prayer and priests can hear confessions if they are wearing a mask and gloves and stay more than 3 feet away from the penitent. But people are being encouraged not to leave their homes at all.

The first reading at Mass March 20 was from Hosea, and it encourages people to return to the Lord with all their hearts, recognizing their sins and letting God forgive them, the pope said in his homily.

"Return to your father who is waiting for you," the pope said. "The God of tenderness will heal us; he will heal us of the many, many wounds of life and the many ugly things we have done. Each of us has our own!"

God welcomes every repentant sinner with open arms, he said. "It's like going home."

Lent is a special time "to let God wash us, purify us, to let God embrace us," the pope said, and the best place for that is the confessional.

"But many people today would tell me, 'Father, where can I find a priest, a confessor, because I can't leave the house? And I want to make peace with the Lord, I want him to embrace me, I want the Father's embrace.'"

The pope said his response would be, "Do what the Catechism (of the Catholic Church) says. It is very clear: If you cannot find a priest to confess to, speak directly with God, your father, and tell him the truth. Say, 'Lord, I did this, this, this. Forgive me,' and ask for pardon with all your heart."

Make an act of contrition, the pope said, and promise God, "I will go to confession afterward, but forgive me now." And immediately you will return to a state of grace with God."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, N. 1452, says: "When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called 'perfect' – contrition of charity. Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible."
Rite of Election

PREPARING FOR FULL COMMUNION IN THE CHURCH

The Rite of Election was celebrated March 1 in the Diocese of Victoria with 18 parishes represented at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. Bishop Brendan Cahill is shown with the catechumens (top), and the candidates (bottom) seeking full communion with the Catholic Church. Following the Rite of Election, they were welcomed to a reception and tour of the chancery.

Photos by Janet Jones
**How to Pray the TV Mass from Home**

Creating a sacred space to reverently watch the mass in your home

- Create a prayer altar under your TV or streaming device. Consider setting a crucifix or other sacred art in the prayer space.
- Open your bible to the gospel of the day and place it on your “home altar” to remind you that the Word of God is among you.
- Light a candle to symbolize the beautiful light that shines in the darkness and to help your home resemble the Church.
- Set up chairs like a pew to help you engage in the mass and keep you from passively watching from the couch.
- Get dressed as you normally would when attending mass. Keeping this routine is especially helpful for children.
- If you have holy water at home, bless yourself and your family before you begin the mass.
- Fully participate by standing, kneeling, sitting and responding according to the rubrics of the mass.
- Engage in community by having coffee and breakfast with your family after mass or by calling your loved ones to connect.

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**Presidio La Bahia**

For information, visit their Facebook page at Presidio La Bahia - Goliad, Texas.

Open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is $5 for adults, $4.50 for seniors, $3.50 for military personnel, $2 for children 6-11, and under 6 are free. Group rates available when reservations are made in advance. Guided tours available to large groups and schools. Please confirm in advance. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information, call 361-645-3752.

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**Men’s conference succeeds, despite the devil in the details**

**JANET JONES, Editor**

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

When Justin Reyes took the directorship of the new Office of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria in October, he made the decision to start with the men, the traditional heads of the household and expected leaders of the family.

If “the enemy” wants to destroy the family, he will start with the men, Reyes said.

“The enemy” was working extra hard to derail Reyes’ much-anticipated “Get in the Game!” Men’s Gathering. Great plans were made, great promotions went out and excitement was palpable among those who were working on this event.

And then COVID-19 happened. There would not be a cathedral packed with men after all.

But Reyes rolled with the punches, the same day making the decision to try and go virtual with the event. In the hustle and bustle, several things went wrong and he held his breath waiting for this and that to work properly.

Also, he said, there were several people who were skeptical about a “virtual” conference succeeding in this market.

But finally, the afternoon before, it was a go.

“It was insane, the different road blocks along the way,” Reyes said. “I’ve never experienced spiritual warfare like that.”

But on Saturday morning, March 21, 109 men came together remotely for a rosary, Mass with Bishop Brendan Cahill and to hear a powerful message from Damon West, former college football player who went to prison, had a complete change of heart, and came out clean and sober with a network of good men he’d met in a prison ACTS retreat.

The overall message to the men was that growing in faith in a “team sport.” You need to have a “band of brothers,” as described in a Knights of Columbus video presented during the gathering.

Bishop Brendan J. Cahill who celebrated Mass at the beginning of the event, also spoke to the men and offered ways for them to encourage other men. He said building a strong network of men can be as easy as calling some old friends on the phone to see how they are doing. “Imagine if 100 people called five friends a day, for a week?” he said.

One of the results of the conference is that several men expressed the desire to join a men’s group of some sort and others replied that they wanted to start one.

Frank Tilley, a member of Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria who will become a permanent deacon later this year, said the conference gave some new energy to an idea he’s had about starting a men’s group in his parish.

Tilley has had the idea for a while, but, he said, for a variety of reasons he “hasn’t pulled the trigger” on it. Tilley has in the past been active in ACTS and in prison ministry. Now that there’s a lot of quiet time and no public gathering, the idea of finding a new way to bring about a men’s group is able to grow a little. The diocese men’s conference came up at the right time, he said.

“If ever there was going to be a time to do this, now is the time,” I guess.

Reyes had a team of men from the Diocese of Victoria who already were involved in men’s ministries and made themselves available to make the conference a success and offer encouragement for men and men’s ministry. His team included Cody Horton of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria; Philip Leopold of St. Philip the Apostle, El Campo; Rick Jahn of St. Joseph, Yoakum; David Schmidt of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Shiner; David Zapalac of La Grange; Eamon McCourt of St. Rose, Schulenburg; and Deacon Walley Rodriguez of Holy Cross, Bay City.

One more good thing that came out of the conference was money raised for a chosen charity – CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates), which trains volunteers to be a voice for children in the foster care system, advocating for the child in court. CASA is planning a workshop on engaging fathers, Reyes said.
Amor Meus Spirituality Center to host workshop on dreams

VICTORIA — Amor Meus Spirituality Center invites you to “Dreams and Your Call to Be Fully Alive,” a workshop on dreams at Incarnate Word Conv, 1101 N.E. Water St., on Saturday, April 25, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

“Dreams, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, are an ever-present inner call to wholeness and holiness, an invitation to relate to God and to our deepest inner self, and a gift to the individual dreamer as well as the community,” says Sister Dorothy Batto, CCVI, who will lead the discussion.

This workshop will offer “a deeper understanding and appreciation of dreams and ways to explore hidden mysteries contained in them” as well as ways to remember your dreams. It will offer an understanding of “the vital role that dreams can play in furthering growth — physically, psychologically, spiritually, socially, and culturally.”

Sister Dorothy has 50 years of experience in educational, spiritual and pastoral ministries, a bachelor of arts degree from the University of the Incarnate Word; a master’s degree in religious studies from St. Louis University; a master’s in transpersonal studies from the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology; and spiritual direction training from Mercy Institute.

She is the director of The Sacred Garden ministry centered in Bandera. It has several satellite programs in surrounding rural communities. This ministry is dedicated to the psychological and spiritual growth of all who desire to live a more dynamic and meaningful life. She is also a spiritual director and retreat director in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, a team member of the international Ministry to Ministers sabbatical program at Oblate School of Theology, and Formation Team member for her religious congregation, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio.

We no longer purchase lunches, so please bring your own lunch. A love offering for the Charity of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio.

• Submitted by Sister Marian Sturm, IWBS

Sunday Readings from April 7 - May 10

April 7 ~ Chrism Mass
Isaiah 61:1-3A, 6A, 8B-9
Psalms 89:21-22, 25, 27
Revelations 1:5-8
Luke 4:16-21

April 9 ~ Holy Thursday
Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16BC, 17-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

April 10 ~ Good Friday
of the Lord’s Passion
Isaiah 52:13—53:12
Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1 — 19:42

April 11 ~ Holy Saturday
At the Easter Vigil in the
Holy Night of Easter
Reading 1: Genesis 1:1 — 2:2
Psalms 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35
Reading 2: Genesis 22:1-18
Psalms 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11
Reading 3: Exodus 14:15 — 15:1
Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18
Reading 4: Isaiah 54:5-14
Psalms 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13
Reading 5: Isaiah 55:1-11
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
Reading 6: Baruch 3:9-15, 32—4:4
Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 11
Reading 7: Ezekiel 36:16-17A, 18-28

May 3 ~ Fourth Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:14A, 36-41
Psalms 23: 1-3A, 3B4, 5, 6
Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
1 Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

May 10 ~ Fifth Sunday of Easter
Acts 2:4-5, 7-8, 9-10, 11
1 Peter 1:17-21

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, www.usccb.org/bible/readings.

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign

Pathways with Patti

POSTPONED
NEW DATE for
DC, NYC and NIAGARA
September 18 - 26, 2020

Philadelphia, Amish Country & Fall Foliage in the Brandywine Valley
October 4-9
Travel Presentation on April 23
~ Germany & Austria ~
Christmas Markets
December 5-13
Call or email for more details.

334 Jurek Road
Port Lavaca, TX 77979
(361) 552.2695 or (361) 920.3216
e-mail: zkmm@tisd.net
www.pathwayswithpatti.com

The Emmaus Center

The Emmaus Center provides individual, couple, family, adolescent and children’s counseling as well as specialized support groups from a Catholic perspective. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (361) 212-0830.

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You can follow Journeys of Faith with Ceci on Facebook!
San Óscar Romero aparece en esta foto sin fecha saludando a fieles en San Salvador, El Salvador. San Romero continúa hasta este día influenciando a los miembros de la iglesia de Estados Unidos, desde los laicos hasta los obispos de los Estados Unidos, algunos quienes buscan su figura como modelo de seguir la enseñanza de la iglesia, de defender a los vulnerables y proteger los derechos humanos de los pobres. (Foto CNS-Octavio Duran)

Papa reza por personas con dificultades económicas debido a la pandemia

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El papa Francisco ofreció oraciones por todos aquellos, especialmente por familias que enfrentan dificultades económicas a causa de la pandemia del coronavirus.

“Oremos por las personas que están empeñando a sufrir problemas económicos porque no pueden trabajar debido a la pandemia, y todo esto recae sobre la familia”, dijo al principio de la misa el 23 de marzo.

Casi 25 millones de trabajos se perderán en todo el mundo debido a COVID-19, calculó la Organización Laboral Internacional en un informe preliminar de evaluación publicado el 18 de marzo. Sin embargo, dice que el impacto sobre el empleo podría ser menor si hubiera una respuesta de políticas coordinadas internacionalmente, parecida a la que se dio durante la crisis financiera global de 2008.

Durante la misa retransmitida de la mañana, el papa reflexionó sobre lo que requiere la oración verdadera.

Muchas veces la oración puede ser simplemente una costumbre de recitar una serie de palabras, dijo en su homilía.

Pero la oración verdadera brota de un corazón lleno de fe, dijo.

“Tengamos cuidado durante la oración de no caer en la rutina, sin la consciencia de que el Señor está ahí, de que estoy hablando con el Señor y de que él puede resolver el problema”, dijo el papa.

Lo segundo que se necesita es perseverancia, dijo.

“Si tienes fe, estás seguro de que el Señor te dará lo que pides. Y si el Señor te hace esperar, llamas y llamas y llamas hasta que concede la gracia”.

Lo tercero que quiere Dios en la oración es valor, dijo. El valor de seguir orando y de argumentarle a Dios, como Moisés, que defendió a su pueblo contra el deseo de Dios de golpearlos por sus pecados.

“Lo tercer que quiere Dios en la oración es valor”, dijo. El valor de seguir orando y a veces de argumentarle a Dios, como Moisés, que defendió a su pueblo contra el deseo de Dios de golpearlos por sus pecados.

En estos días, es necesario orar, orar más y orar con perseverancia, valentía y la fe en que Dios puede intervenir, dijo.

San Óscar Romero aparece en esta foto sin fecha saludando a fieles en San Salvador, El Salvador. San Romero continúa hasta este día influenciando a los miembros de la iglesia de Estados Unidos, desde los laicos hasta los obispos de los Estados Unidos, algunos quienes buscan su figura como modelo de seguir la enseñanza de la iglesia, de defender a los vulnerables y proteger los derechos humanos de los pobres. (Foto CNS-Octavio Duran)
pose: “to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God.”
(Luke 4:43)
If you were one of Jesus’s apostles, with him day and night for three years, what kind of things did you see? In Matthew 11:5-6, we read, “… the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”

After his Resurrection and before being assumed into heaven, what does Jesus teach his apostles? Go to Acts 1:3 for the answer. “He presented himself alive to them by many proofs after he had suffered, appearing to them during 40 days and speaking about the kingdom of God.”

In 2002, St. John Paul II gave us the Luminous Mysteries. The third mystery is Proclamation of the Kingdom. If we are “sent” into the world to proclaim the Kingdom of God, where does this power come from? Through baptism the lay faithful are made one body with Christ and are established among the People of God. We are made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly office of Christ.

St. John Paul II, in Christifideles Laici, said, “A new state of affairs today both in the Church and in social, economic, political and cultural life, calls with a particular urgency for the action of the lay faithful. It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle.”

Do you see why it is important to stay until the end of Mass and receive the final blessing? All of us are given the same mission, to proclaim the kingdom of God every day, and realize it is only for one week. We will come back to Mass.

What is our source of unity in the Catholic Church? Of course, it is the Eucharist.

If we know this, then why do some people hold hands during the “Our Father”? The consecrated Host is on the altar, and the priest invites us to pray the “Our Father,” and then it happens. People start holding hands, and even crossing the aisles. Why?

Could it be that we have lost our sense of unity? Or is it because we no longer believe that Jesus is really present?

Just after this is the Rite of Peace. Remember it is “rite,” and so we must follow certain guidelines.

What we see now in church at the exchange of the sign of peace seems to have little to do with its liturgical purpose. It is “the” sign of peace, and not “a” sign of peace. People move from their seats to search out friends and family in other parts of the church. It becomes one great feel-good moment; a group hug; a love-in. From a liturgical point of view, it is most awkward.

We should be getting ready and focusing our attention on the breaking of bread. We say, “Lamb of God…” when the priest breaks the bread. The Lamb of God is not simply a hymn we sing around this time during the Mass. It should be sung precisely at the moment of the breaking of the bread, because we echo Luke 24:35, “Then the two recounted what had taken place on the way and how he [Jesus] was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.”

This is a sublime moment of Communion.

On a good day, most people will have refocused and begun singing along by the second of the three invocations in the Lamb of God. In 1977, the Bishop’s Committee on Liturgy stated, “The sign of peace is not a ‘meet and greet’ but rather it symbolizes the communion and peace of the whole Church in Christ.”

Once we come to a better understanding of all the parts of the Mass in this same manner, our faith comes alive, and we can begin to actively participate in our public form of worship.

• Chris Kallus is a longtime parish educator for Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria. In 2013 he developed and implemented the adult faith formation program, Becoming a Credible Witness. “Ita Missa Est” is one of many classes he teaches each year at OLV.
Note: All Events Are Subject To Cancellation Or Rescheduling

GAMES PARTY — The Altar Society of St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Victoria is planning a Games Party from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on April 28 in the parish hall. There will be lunch, door prizes and more. Cost is $8. This event, like others, is subject to being canceled or postponed based on the coronavirus pandemic precautionary measures. Please call Dorothy at 361-573-3569 or Eunice at 576-1856 to make reservations or check on the status of the event. Pictured clockwise from left are Shirley Kloesel, Fred Kloesel, Dorothy Bomba and Pattie Stevens.

Meals • Picnics and More

April

Bloomington – St. Patrick’s Spring Festival will be April 26, featuring barbecue brisket plates for $10 each. To-go plates will be ready at 9 a.m., and dine in begins at 11 a.m. Live auction begins at 11:30. There also will be a silent auction, raffle, country store, cakewalk and games for children.

Weimar – St. Michael Spring Picnic will be April 26. A fried chicken and sausage dinner for $10 p/p. Polka Mass at 10:30 a.m. See ad on pg. 8.

Yorktown – San Luis Church, 502 E. 2nd St., will host its annual Jamaica on April 26. Mass begins at 8 a.m. at the church. At 11 a.m. a carne guisada dinner with rice and beans will be served for $10 a plate, dine in or take out. There will be live music all day, children’s bounce houses opening at noon, horseshoe and washer tournaments beginning at 1 (registration at noon), and food booths and cakewalk will begin at 2 p.m. The live auction will begin at 3. Those interested in the auction are encouraged to sign up early. There will be a raffle drawing at 7 p.m. Tickets are $5 each or five for $20.

May

Victoria–Holy Family Festival, May 3
Cuero–St. Michael Spring Festival, May 17
Hallettsville–Sacred Heart Parish Picnic, May 24
Shiner–Sts. Cyril and Methodius Picnic, May 24

ACTS Retreats—Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS Retreats in the diocese should email dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.

Catholic Family Services –To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at http://www.naclfm.org.

Courage – Ministers to persons with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. The ministry also has an outreach, EnCourage, which ministers to relatives, spouses, and friends of persons with same-sex attractions. It is a Roman Catholic Apostolate endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family. For information, visit http://www.couragec.net.

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria—A sister organization to the Gabriel Project staffed by volunteers that offers help to girls and women who find themselves in a difficult situation due to an unplanned pregnancy. Office located at 1501 E. Red River, is open 1-4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free pregnancy tests offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal careNew volunteers are welcome. For information call 361-575-6171.

Emmanus Center – Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children’s counseling, as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available if requested. To make an appointment, call 361-212-0830. For information, see Page 12.

Engaged Encounter 2020 Dates – April 17-19, June 5-7, Sept. 18-20, and Nov. 13-15. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit www.victoriadiocese.org.

Gabriel Project – Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy as an alternative to abortion. Victoria: Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 101 W. Convent. Light supper included. For angel workshop/training dates, contact Lisa Kainer 361-676-3264 or lisa_haysquierd@yahoo.com; DeWitt County: Meetings are the third Monday of each month during the school year at 5:30 p.m. at the Yorktown Public Library, 103 W. Main St. Coordinators for DeWitt Chapter are Wayne and Margie Smith 361-491-0067; Lavaca County: Meets 6 p.m. (during the school year), contact Julie Kubena Lavaca County Coordinator at 361-798-3579 for dates and location. See ad, Page 5.

Grief Ministry – An ongoing Grief Group meets at the Holy Family Church conference room in Victoria at 7 p.m., on the first and third Thursdays each month. Adults who have experienced the death of a loved one may attend (after three months have passed). Call Sharon at 361-578-7572 before attending.

i.d.9:16 Ministry – For adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married. Held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with 6 p.m. Mass followed by dinner and a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan and fellowship. Childcare available to those who RSVP. It is open to all young adults of the diocese. For information, or to RSVP for events, e-mail id916victoria@gmail.com.

Incarnate Word Prayer Group – Praise and worship 7:30-9 p.m. Mondays in the auditorium at Incarnate Word Convert, 1101 N.E. Water St. For information, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at 361-575-7111 or amormeus@yahoo.com.

Mothers of Grace – A new mother’s group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Jennifer Ruiz at book.leslie@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/.

Natural Family Planning – NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMS) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at 505-710-0930 or susannekoch614@gmail.com. Also in the Cuero area contact, Ashley Rodriguez at 361-293-0700 or ashleyfay99@gmail.com.

Raphael’s Refuge – To build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in Flatonia. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, contact Midge Elam at 361-865-3021, 361-258-1514, or visit www.raphaelsrefuge.org.

Retrouvaille – Retrouvaille, meaning “rediscovery,” is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jbvjov@sbcglobal.net or 361-580-2770; or call 800-470-2230; or visit www.helpourmarriage.org or www.retrouvaille.org.

Mothers of Grace

Contact: Sr. Digna Vela
(361) 575-7111 / e-mail: amormeus@yahoo.com
Web site: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org

See page 12 for Amor Meus Events for April.

God’s Embrace

Contact: Sr. Digna Vela
(361) 574-7525 / e-mail: info@godsembrace.org
Web site: www.godsembrace.com

Upcoming Events: Weekly Prayer: Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Adoration in GEM Chapel, Tuesdays, noon-3:00 p.m.

Pilgrimages

For more pilgrimages, see Journeys of Faith with Ceci on pg. 12.

Do you have any calendar of events for the Lighthouse?
Submit to
lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org
Isolation becomes ‘a blessed space’

Editor’s Note: The following is from the Carmelite Sisters of Mary Ever Virgin in Meyersville, a cloistered order whose members choose this quiet, prayerful life.

We … have put together some thoughts, culled from our years of life in the cloister. We offer them in hope that you may find some small help in them. Most of all we offer our prayers – which remain uninterrupted in this time of uncertainty – for all those affected by the pandemic, that is, for us all.

Prayerfully, in Christ, Sister Maria of Divine Mercy, O.Carm.

Withdrawal from the world, in order to draw closer to God, characterizes the life of a cloistered nun. What she lives every day, moment to moment, ought to be a small part of the life of every Christian. But now a great deal of isolation is being imposed on many, due to the recent pandemic crisis.

There is a difference between withdrawal from the world and isolation. Isolation means you are alone. But the Christian is never alone. God is always with us, dwelling within us by His grace. He is always there, waiting for us to turn to Him, to admit our helplessness and our need for Him, to trust in His amazing love for us, which Our Lord made so manifest on the Cross.

The key to living withdrawal from the world fruitfully, rather than living in isolation, is faith. Holy Mother Church has given us the gift of faith at Baptism. When our faith is renewed our awareness of Him Who loved us into being and sustains us in His love.

We can deepen our love for Christ by taking time to read the Gospels slowly, opening our hearts to Him and speaking with Him in prayer.

The Christian is never alone; he is in Christ. This time can remind us that we are members of the communion of saints in the Mystical Body of Christ. It is an opportunity to get to know the saints in Heaven by praying to them, reading about their lives, asking their help. They are our brothers and sisters and want to help us in our needs and are waiting for us to ask. And let us remember that on the Cross Our Lord gave us His own mother, the Queen of all the Saints, to be our mother. Like a true mother, she loves us and is there for us when we need her.

We can draw near to her especially through praying the rosary. This time can also remind us that no suffering is meaningless. Though we may be separated from others temporarily, we are not severed from the Mystical Body of Christ. Thus, we can unite our sufferings of body or spirit with Our Lord’s sufferings, sharing in His merits. Gazing upon a crucifix or meditating upon the Way of the Cross, even though we cannot physically make the stations, can help us to unite our sufferings to Jesus, offering them for graces for ourselves, for others and for the Holy Souls who have gone to God before us.

Our awareness of the bonds of the communion of saints and of our sharing of spiritual goods grows as we come to each other’s aid in this way. And we further realize that we are never alone.

This awareness of others, praying for others, helps to lift us out of our own concerns and to grow in love for our neighbor.

On a more natural level, when our contacts with other people are limited to a few of the same people, and sometimes not of our own choosing, it is an opportunity to come to know each other on a deeper level, to look beyond the surface and to see in them the beauty of each unique person, made in God’s image. We come to see Christ in them and we ourselves become Christ to others.

With the help of God’s grace, imposed isolation can be transformed into a blessed space. In that place we can slow down and appreciate the little things which we so easily overlook in our busy pace of life and which often carry great gifts from the Lord if we but stop, look, and listen: in nature, in a simple gesture, in a moment of silence filled with the voice of God.

This time of crisis is unsettling the world, but it is a time to remember that it is God’s world and that He “makes all things work to the good of those who love Him.” And after His Resurrection, Our Lord told His disciples, “Behold, I am with you always, even to the end of time.”

Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 

Hebrews 13:8

Jesus – Who, suffered, died, and rose from the dead;
Jesus – Who is the Living One present among us;
Jesus – Who leads us to the end of time where we will reign with Him forever;

The Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin honor the triumph of His Resurrection in their Easter Octave of Prayer, April 12 – 19th. During those days, they will be celebrating Easter Vespers according to Ancient Carmelite custom and will offer to the Lord of life and death any intentions you wish to be included in this holiest week of prayer and praise.

Prayer intentions may be mailed to the Sisters, dropped in the Prayer Request box at the Sisters’ residence, or submitted through the prayer request form on their website: Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin, 11220 FM 237, Meyersville, Texas 77974 www.MaryEverVirgin.org

Online Resources

Live Streamed Masses:
Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory:
http://ourladyofvictory.sermon.net/

There are many DOV parishes on Facebook with daily Mass, Stations of the Cross, and Reflections

CatholicTV Network:
www.watchthemass.com/

Word on Fire: see below and at www.wordonfire.org/daily-mass/

Websites:
• Magnificat is providing FREE access to their online version to help people pray from home
• CatholicBrain is offering free access through Divine Mercy Sunday 4/19 - great for kids!
• Find and start a Novena!
• Start a free trial of formed.org which offers various types of Catholic media
• Parents of young children here is a website that you might find useful catholicmom.com and Facebook at www.facebook.com/CatholicMomCommunity/